



Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots

Deborah Feldman

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The instant *New York Times* bestselling memoir of a young Jewish woman's escape from a religious sect, in the tradition of Ayaan Hirsi Ali's *Infidel* and Carolyn Jessop's *Escape*, featuring a new epilogue by the author.

As a member of the strictly religious Satmar sect of Hasidic Judaism, Deborah Feldman grew up under a code of relentlessly enforced customs governing everything from what she could wear and to whom she could speak to what she was allowed to read. It was stolen moments spent with the empowered literary characters of Jane Austen and Louisa May Alcott that helped her to imagine an alternative way of life. Trapped as a teenager in a sexually and emotionally dysfunctional marriage to a man she barely knew, the tension between Deborah's desires and her responsibilities as a good Satmar girl grew more explosive until she gave birth at nineteen and realized that, for the sake of herself and her son, she had to escape.

Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots Details

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Melanie Linn says

While "Unorthodox" is a fascinating and enthralling book, I feel as though it was written several years too early. The book left me with many questions, questions that perhaps could not be addressed by the author because her escape from Hasidism is still too fresh. Did she ever get to the bottom of her husband's infidelity? How was she able to take her son with her when she mentions in the book that 'it's never been done'? Did she lose all contact with her grandparents after she left? Did she become closer to her own mother as a result of her break with her past? I realize that this book was the author's ticket to escaping Hasidism, but it would have benefited greatly from a larger sense of perspective.

Jaidee says

5 "controversial, vivid, courageous" stars !

2017 Honorable Mention with High Distinction Read

This book has been through so much controversy. Friends, family and her former hasidic Satmar community have blogged, exposed and tried to shame Ms. Feldman into quiet submission of her experiences and opinions and thoughts. I have perused some of these. I do not blame the community for reacting in this way. Some of them believe in the divinity and peacefulness of their way of life. Others are envious of her freedom and for others it may trigger their own guilt and shame. I do not judge their protectiveness harshly, its just that, Ms. Feldman has already been through so much, does she need to go through life having her character and well-being under constant assault.

Please don't get me wrong I am not saying that Ms. Feldman is completely truthful but none of us is. Our memories are filled with errors, interpretations, fears, desires and if you add in a measure of trauma, naivete and neglect then what actually happened and what one understands can be two vastly different things.

Was the writing of this memoir opportunistic ? Perhaps it was. We must remember her circumstances of lack of education, skills or ways of living in the modern world.

Despite these issues with this book I greatly admire Ms. Feldman and her writing. She has a magical way to transporting you to her childhood and adolescence that make you feel that you are part of the Hasidic community. Their isolation, beliefs, customs, social structure and ways of being in the world. The writing is rich, descriptive, sad but also often very funny, loving, admiring even.

I cried, I laughed. I truly believe that Ms. Feldman wants some modified reform of this community not for selfish reasons but to protect women and children. What some men often forget that is that feminism isn't about only equality and justice for women but for all humankind. When women have equal access to all then men can let go of some of their burdens and be free to be themselves in fuller ways as well as express the whole spectrum of emotions that is often denied them.

Ms. Feldman, in a way, you are a pioneer and I admire your resilience, your passion and a desire to live life on your own terms and at such a young age. In the end, it does not matter, that you were not completely truthful. None of us is.

Lekhi beshalom !

Lisa says

The minute I started this book I was engrossed and I finished it within 2 days. I found as a woman, it was almost infuriating to read. I also think it is disgusting and awful that so many from her former "community" are stalking her and posting fake reviews calling the book false. This book is HER memoir and HER truth and she is completely and utterly entitled to it. This is a rare look into this strange community. It is an interesting read for me personally since I live in an area where there is a large population. I never really knew what to make of these women I see often pushing baby carriages and conversing with no one but their own. Now, I feel a sort of sadness for them. I am sure that many are content and even happy in this lifestyle but I am glad for the author that she wanted more and she was able to attain it.

From Reader Review Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots for online ebook

From reader reviews:

Joel Faulkner:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or perhaps go to the outside with them household or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent many people free time just watching TV, as well as playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity that is look different you can read some sort of book. It is really fun for you. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent all day every day to reading a book. The book Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots it is quite good to read. There are a lot of individuals who recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. When you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the e-book. You can more simply to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not very costly but this book has high quality.

Derrick Tompkins:

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Sean Jones:

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